

VZCZCXRO6527

OO RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHLH RUEHLN RUEHPW RUEHVK RUEHYG

DE RUEHEK #1342/01 3061302

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

O 021302Z NOV 07

FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0338

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE

RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2318

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC

RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0740

RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2722

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2106

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP

RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 001342

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PREL KG

SUBJECT: KYRGYZ PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SET FOR DECEMBER 16

REF: A. BISHKEK 1304

1B. BISHKEK 1296

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11. (SBU) SUMMARY: Kyrgyzstan will hold parliamentary elections December 16. Under the new constitution, the parliament will consist of 90 seats elected on a proportional basis by party list. The new electoral code establishes thresholds of 5% of all eligible voters as well as 0.5% of voters in each of the seven oblasts, in Bishkek, and in Osh in order to obtain seats in the parliament. Fifty parties have registered their intention to run, but this number is likely to decrease as additional documentation and the \$14,000 deposit come due and smaller parties continue to merge their interests. Septel will cover the parties with a realistic chance of getting into the new parliament. The official campaign period begins November 26, and partisan campaigning is prohibited until then. An October 27 concert to "celebrate" the new constitution, sponsored by the city of Bishkek, turned into a de facto rally for President Bakiyev's new Ak Jol party. END SUMMARY.

December 16 Election by Party List

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12. (SBU) On October 21, Kyrgyz voters approved a new constitution and electoral code in a nationwide referendum marred by blatant ballot stuffing and inflated voter turnout figures. (Ref A) On October 22, President Bakiyev dissolved the parliament, which consisted of 75 seats elected from single-member constituencies. On October 23 Bakiyev signed a decree setting the new parliamentary elections for December 16. Under the new constitution, the parliament will expand to 90 members, all elected on a proportional basis by political party list. The new electoral code establishes high thresholds for a party to obtain seats in the parliament. A party must get 5% of the total number of registered voters (not 5% of votes cast), and 0.5% of registered voters in each of the seven oblasts, in Bishkek,

and in Osh, in order to enter parliament.

Fifty Parties Register . . .

¶3. (U) The October 23 election decree gave parties until October 26 to register their participation in the election with the Central Election Commission (CEC). For the first day and a half the CEC wasn't prepared to start the process; however, the CEC accepted registrations from 50 parties by the deadline. The CEC also registered 92 media outlets to cover the election: 62 newspapers, 16 television stations, 6 radio stations, 6 information agencies, and 2 advertising agencies.

. . . But Some Will Drop Out

¶4. (SBU) According to the calendar of pre-election activities, November 18 is the deadline for parties to submit their lists and other relevant documents. Significantly, November 18 is also the deadline for parties to pay a 500,000 som (over \$14,000) deposit. This deposit will likely prove a high barrier for many of the smaller parties, causing some to drop out by that point. Also, several parties are still in discussion over possible mergers.

The Rest of the Election Calendar

¶5. (U) Candidates on the lists must be registered individually with the CEC by November 25. The official campaign period begins on November 26, and parties are required to refrain from partisan political activity until the campaign period. On November 30, the parties will draw

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lots for free print media space and airtime for campaigning. The accreditation period for international observers runs from November 23 to December 12.

Early Start to Campaign?

¶6. (SBU) On October 27, new (acting) Mayor Daniyar Usenov and the city of Bishkek sponsored a concert in Ala-Too Square to "celebrate" the referendum and new constitution. The concert included pop stars from Russia. The concert quickly turned into a de facto rally for President Bakiyev's new Ak Jol party, with "Ak Jol" banners, laser lights projecting "Ak Jol" across buildings, and Bakiyev and Usenov on stage wearing Ak Jol scarves. Officials later claimed that this was not a campaign rally with government resources, as it was the "Ak Jol Movement," not the "party," that sponsored the concert. On October 31, the CEC issued a notice reminding parties that the campaign period begins November 26.

YOVANOVITCH